VII.—The Creepers.

By LEONHARD STEJNEGER.

The authorities are now pretty well agreed that there occur in Japan two forms of the Common Creeper (*Certhia familiaris*), the habitats of which are separated by "Blakiston's Line." Their relations, however, have been barely touched upon by previous writers, so that some additional remarks may not be out of place.

It should be remarked that our material is very scant, and that additional specimens of Creepers from all parts of the empire are very desirable.

The Japanese forms may be distinguished as follows:

a^1.—White markings above smaller, more or less tinged with tawny; abdomen, flanks and under tail-coverts more or less strongly suffused with tawny.
C. familiaris.

a^2.—White markings above larger and purer; entire under surface pure white, with hardly any trace of tawny on flanks and under tail-coverts.
C. familiaris scandalaca.

(181) Certhia familiaris Linn.

Common Creeper. Kiba-shiri.

1758.—*Certhia familiaris* Linn., S. N., 10 ed., I, p. 118.—*Id.*, S. N., 12 ed., I, p. 184 (1766).—Blakist. & Pryer, Ibis, 1878, p. 230 (*part*).—*Iid.*, Trans. As. Soc. Jap., VIII, 1880, p. 210 (*part*).—*Iid., ibid.*, X, 1882, p. 138 (*part*).—Blakist., Chrysanth., Feb., 1883, p. ——.—*Id.*, Amend. List B. Jap., p. 14 (*part*) (1884).—Jouy, Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., VI, 1883, p. 239 (*part*).—Ridgway, Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., VI, 1883, p. 370 (*part*).

1770.—*Motacilla scolopacina* Ström, Norske Vidensk. Selsk. Nye Skr., II (p. 367, pl. —).

1831.—*Certhia macrodactyla* Brehm, Handb. Vög. Deutschl., p. 208.

1831.—*Certhia septentrionalis* Brehm, Handb. Vög. Deutschl., p. 210, pl. xiv, fig. 5.

1847.—*Certhia costæ* Bailly, Observ. Ois. Savoie, p. —.

1849.—*Certhia ?* Temm. & Schleg., Fauna Japon., Aves, p. 138.

1850.—*Certhia nattereri* Bonap., Consp. Av., I, p. 224 (*nec C. nattereri* Bonap., 1838? nomen nudum.).

1853.—*Certhia turneri* Reichenbach, Handb. Spec. Orn., Scans., p. 263.

1855.—*Certhia microrhynchos* Brehm, Naumannia, 1855, p. 274 (nom. nud.).

1856.—*Certhia familiaris macrodactyla* Brehm, Naumannia, 1856, p. 357.

1856.—*Certhia familiaris vera* Brehm, Naumannia, 1856, p. 357.

1856.—*Certhia familiaris septentrionalis* Brehm, Naumannia, 1856, p. 357.

1856.—*Certhia familiaris brachyrhynchos* Brehm, Naumannia, 1856, p. 358.

1856.—*Certhia familiaris pusilla* Brehm, Naumannia, 1856, p. 358.

1867.—*Certhia brachydactyla* Gerbe, Orn. Eur., I, p. 187 (*nec* Brehm).

1883.—[*Certhia familiaris*] *? costæ* Ridgway, Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., VI, 1883, p. 112.

Messrs. Blakiston and Pryer as early as 1878 (Ibis, 1878, p. 230) recognized differences between the Creepers inhabiting Yezo and "those from the south." Mr. R. Ridgway, who also compared specimens from Yezo and Hondo, made a similar remark (Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., VI,

1883, p. 370), and finally Mr. Seebohm determined the Yezo bird as "the Arctic or pale form known as var. *scandulaca*" (Ibis, 1884, p. 37). The specimen he so identified is now in the U. S. National Museum (No. 96111), and having no Siberian examples for comparison, I accept his determination as correct.

The next question is as to the identity of the Hondo, or Southern, bird. Mr. Ridgway (*l. c.*) stated that the specimen before him (U. S. Nat. Mus. No. 91354) "is very tawny above, and hardly distinguishable from some German examples," a statement which I can fully corroborate, with the addition that I am unable to find the slightest difference between it and No. 88495, a male from Kurhessen, Germany, collected by Count von Berlepsch, March 31, 1879, except that the former has the bill somewhat smaller, due to its being a female. A pair received from the Tokio Educational Museum (♂, U. S. Nat. Mus. No. 109351, Iwaki, Hondo, February 3, 1886; ♀, No. 109352, *ibid.*, February 5, 1886), agree quite as well with other specimens from the same locality and collector in Germany, the bill of the male being fully as long as in the birds from the latter country.

It may be that a considerably larger series of birds from Scandinavia and Central Europe than I have at present (five from the former locality, twelve from the latter) might establish a slight difference in the coloration, as those before me seem to indicate that the Scandinavian examples are a trifle paler. But it seems doubtful to me, in view of the slightness of the difference and the individual variation observable, if a sufficient percentage of specimens can be satisfactorily distinguished. Individuals from the higher mountains in southern Europe are said to be paler than those in the valleys and lowlands, and are presumably absolutely identical with Scandinavian examples. *C. costæ* and *C. nattereri* would then be synonyms of *C. familiaris*, a name which, of course, particularly belongs to the Scandinavian bird, but as I have no examples from southern mountains (unless one would refer to this category a specimen from the Vosges, France, U. S. Nat. Mus. No. 102927, which is indeed labeled *C. costæ* without differing in the least from other Central European specimens of the lowlands), I am unable to form an opinion. I may mention that in case a southern lowland form should become recognized by ornithologists, its proper name would be *Certhia familiaris macrodactyla* BREHM (syn. = *C. brachydactyla* Auct. *nec* Brehm!!).*

In regard to the differences between the two races inhabiting Japan, I may remark that judging from the comparatively scant material before me there seems to be no appreciable difference in size, as will be

* Since the above was set in type I have received a specimen from Hallein, Salzburg, Austria (U. S. Nat. Mus., No. 113882, collected by Victor, Ritter von Tschusi zu Schmidhoffen), which in every way is indistinguishable from the Scandinavian examples. It seems to corroborate the view of there being two forms in Continental Europe (besides *C. brachydactyla*), one of which is confined to the high mountains and identical with the Scandinavian form.

seen from the subjoined tables of dimensions, though it may be that the Yezo birds have, on an average, somewhat longer bills. The chief distinction, however, lies in the coloration, but is much more easily appreciated on seeing specimens from both islands along-side each other, than expressed in words which of necessity must be comparative. In *C. scandulaca* from Yezo the white markings on the upper surface are much larger, and the tawny wash of the ground color much paler, thus making the appearance of the bird considerably lighter; the supercciliary stripe is particularly broad and pure white, and on the pale tawny rump there are quite distinct white spots; the whole under side is much more glossy and pure white, while in the Hondo examples of *C. familiaris* abdomen, flanks, and under tail-coverts are more or less strongly washed with tawny.

If we consider the fact that in Southern Europe a rather pale race is said to inhabit the high mountain regions, there is nothing surprising in the statement by Messrs. Blakiston and Pryer, that they found a specimen from Nikko, Hondo, to agree with Yezo examples. It would be somewhat premature, however, were we to conclude that the elevated portions of Hondo are inhabited by a race indistinguishable from *C. scandulaca*. Until further evidence is forthcoming, I shall look upon the specimen in question as a stray individual from the north, or possibly as a very light individual of the regular resident bird of Hondo.

I.—*Measurements of Japanese specimens.*

U. S. Nat. Museum Number.	Collector and Number.	Sex and age.	Locality.	Date.	Wing.	Tail feathers.	Bill from nasal groove.	Tarsus.	Middle toe.
109351	Namiyo.....	♂ ad.	Iwaki, Hondo.....	Feb. 3, 1886	63	60	10.5	14	16
109352	....do	♀ ad.	.....do	Feb. 5, 1886	57	56	9	14	16
91354	Jouy, 821.....	♀ ad.	Tate Yama, Hondo..	Nov. 30, 1882	62	61	9	.....	.....

II.—*Measurements of European specimens.*

U. S. Nat. Museum number.	Collector and number.	Sex and age.	Locality.	Date.	Wing.	Tail-feathers.	Bill from nasal groove.	Tarsus.	Middle toe with claw.	Total length.
98525	Stejn., 296.....	♂ ad.	Bergen, Norway.....	Dec. 15, 1878	65	65	11	16	17	137
98008	.....	♀ ad.	.....do	Nov. 20, 1881	62	63	10	15	16	....
98524	Stejn., 224.....	♂ ad.	.....do	Jan. 25, 1878	61	61	9	15	17	...
98526	Stejn., 391.....	♀ ad.	.....do	Jan. 18, 1880	63	63	10	15	17	129
111117	Collett.....	♂ ad.	Christiania, Norway	Nov. 26, 1880	64	58	11.5	15	.....	....
88496	Berlepsch, 918...	♂ ad.	Kurhessen, Germany	Nov. 4, 1880	65	62	10.5	16	17	136
88492	Berlepsch, 978 ..	♂ ad.	.....do	Feb. 24, 1882	64	63	10.5	16	17	140
88494	Berlepsch, 3381	♂ ad.	.....do	Mch. 19, 1878	64	....	10	15	16	125

II.—*Measurements of European specimens*—Continued.

U. S. Nat. Museum number.	Collector and Number.	Sex and age.	Locality.	Date.	Wing.	Tail-feathers.	Bill from nasal groove.	Tarsus.	Middle toe with claw.	Total length.
88493	Berlepsch, 1714 *a*	♂ ad.	.....do	Mch.20, 1869	64	....	10	16	17	130
88497	Berlepsch, 2104..	♂ ad.	.....do	Mch.30, 1876	66	....	11	16	17	120
88495	Berlepsch, 4449..	♂ ad.	.....do	Mch.31, 1879	62	....	10.5	15	16	131
56747	Schlüter, 593....	♂ ad.	Saxony, Germany....	.....	65	65	11	....	.....	....
113882	Tschusi	♂ ad.	Salzburg, Austria....	Nov. 3, 1887	64	62	11.5	16	16	137
23416	Lazar	♂ ad.	Hungary	1860	61	..	11	...	.....	...
102927	Mougel	♂ ad.	Vosges, France.....	Oct., 1877	64	66	10	16	....	....
18947	Dronet.....	ad.	France	.....	65	61	.....	...	.....	....
17006	Dronet.....	ad.	Europe	.....	61	60	.....	....	.....	....

Certhia familiaris scandulaca (PALL.).

Siberian Creeper.

1826.—*Certhia scandulaca* PALLAS, Zoogr. Ross. As., I, p. 432 (*part*).—SEEBOHM, Ibis, 1882, p. 422.

1853.—? "*Certhia longicauda* BRANDT, Bullet. de l'Acad. de St.-Pétersb., 1852, aus Sibirien," *fide* REICHENBACH, Handb. Spec. Ornith., p. 263 (*nom nud.*).

1853.—*Certhia familiaris* MIDDENDORFF, Sibir. Reise, I, ii, (p.162).—WHITELY, Ibis, 1867, p. 196.—SWINHOE, Ibis, 1874, 152.—*Id., ibid.*, 1875, p. 145.—BROOKS, Ibis, 1874, p. 461.—BLAKIST. & PRYER, Ibis, 1878, p. 230 (*part*).—*Iid.*, Trans. As. Soc. Jap., VIII, 1880, p. 210 (*part*).—*Iid., ibid.*, X, 1882, p. 138 (*part*).—BLAKIST., Chrysanth., 1882, p. 522.—*Id., ibid.*, 1883, p. 29.—*Id.*, Amend. List B. Jap., p. 47 (1884).—JOUY, Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., VI, 1883, p. 289 (*part*).—RIDGWAY, Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., VI, 1883, p. 370 (*part*).—SEEBOHM, Ibis, 1884, p. 37.

1867.—? *Certhia fasciata* DAVID, Nouv. Arch. Mus. d'Hist. Nat., Paris, III, Bull., p. 36,

1883.—*Certhia familiaris*, var. *scandulaca* SEEBOHM, Brit. B. Eggs, I, p. 512.—*Id.*, Ibis, 1884, p. 37.—BLAKIST., Amend. List B. Jap., p. 47 (1884).

The name *Certhia scandulaca* of Pallas was by that author meant to cover the Common Creeper of Europe, and was by no means intended as an appellation specially distinctive of the Siberian white form. His diagnosis is not inapplicable to the latter, however, and as Mr. Seebohm has formally restricted the name given by Pallas to the form in question, it seems available for our purpose, unless "*Certhia longicauda* BRANDT" should have the precedence. This name does not occur in the Bulletin of the St. Petersburg Academy quoted by Reichenbach, and I have been entirely unsuccessful, so far, in hunting down the reference.

It will be seen that I have not included Brooks's *Certhia hodgsoni*, from Cashmere,* in the above synonymy, as is done by many European writers. The principal character of this form is said by Mr. Brooks to be the absence of the pale spot in the outer web of the fourth primary, a character afterwards verified by Mr. Hume in six specimens (Stray Feath.,

* Journ. As. Soc. Bengal, 1872 (p. 74); Stray Feath., III, 1875, p. 233, foot-note. See also Brooks, Ibis, 1884, p. 239.

V, 1877, pp. 73, 74), by Major Biddulph in one* (Ibis, 1881, p. 50; Stray Feath., IX, 1881, p. 315), and by Dr. Scully in several others (Ibis, 1881, p. 431; Stray Feath., X, 1881, p. 103).

On the other hand, Mr. Brooks and Dr. Scully (*ll. cc.*) state that they examined large series of the European birds, in which they never found the spot wanting; Hume (*l. c.*) came to the same result from an inspection of thirteen European specimens; I myself have before me thirty-four specimens from Europe and Asia, all referable to *C. familiaris*, either typical or one of the subspecies (*scandulaca*, *brittanica*, etc.), and I find the spot present on the fourth primary in every one of them. Suppose that Messrs. Brooks and Scully have examined about a dozen specimens each; we would then have eighty Old World examples of *C. familiaris* examined by four observers who were unable to procure a single one without it. In a curious contrast to this result is the following general statement by Mr. Dresser (B. of Eur., III, p. 201), viz, that "some of the European birds have the fourth primary marked, and others have it quite plain." He does not give any further details; does not state in which specimens it was found and in which absent; does not even give the proportional number between the two forms. He only examined twenty specimens of Old World *Certhia familiaris* (besides two *C. hodgsoni*, from Cashmere), and from his statement quoted above one might think that in that series the specimens with and without the spot were about equal in number. How are we to reconcile these facts? Or did Mr. Dresser only use a careless expression, and did he only mean that he has really seen one or two European specimens without the spot? Of course, I do not deny that such specimens occasionally occur, but even if the spot should be found in 1 or 2 per cent. of Old World *C. familiaris*, such an occurrence would not invalidate the claim of *C. hodgsoni* to specific or subspecific distinction, the more so, since this character does not seem to be the only one by which it may be recognized. That this character seems to be much more variable in *Certhia familiaris americana* does not affect the question at all; nor does it matter much that in five examples of the true *Certhia brachydactyla* BREHM (*nec* GERBE!) I find that one lacks the spot (U. S. Nat. Mus. No. 102928) while four have it. The latter form I consider a perfectly distinct species, entirely neglected by the English ornithologists, because described by Brehm and not occurring in Great Britain, and sadly misunderstood by most of the Continental European ornithologists, even by those who adopt the name given by Brehm.†

* He afterwards obtained two immature specimens of the same species (Ibis, 1882, p. 270; Stray Feath., X, 1882, p. 261), and as he has no remarks to the contrary, it is probable that these also exhibited the characteristic features of this form.

† How *Certhia brachydactyla* which is particularly characterized by the shortness of the hind claw **concomitant with a much longer bill** than in *C. familiaris*, can possibly be "immature" specimens of the latter, as surmised by Mr. Seebohm (Brit. B. Eggs, I, p. 513), is quite incomprehensible to me. He also states that *C. brachydactyla* occurs in all parts of the distribution of *C. familiaris;* but who ever found the *true* Short-toed Creeper in Great Britain, Scandinavia, Asia, or America? So far as we know at present, it is restricted to Central and Southern Europe.

I.—*Measurements.*

Museum and number.	Collector and number.	Sex and age.	Locality.	ate.	Wing.	Tail-feathers.	Bill from nasal groove.	Tarsus.	Middle toe with claw.	Total length.
.....	Henson, 166.	♂ (?) ad.	Hakodate, Yezo.	Nov. 3, 1883	59	58	11	15	17	....
U.S. Nat., 96111.	Blak., 3182	♂ ad.	Sapporo, Yezo..	Oct. 19, 1882	65	68	12	15	17	145
Do...91548.	Blak., 3135.	? ad.	Do	Oct. 14, 1882	63	60	11.5	14	16	135

II.—*Measurements from Captain Blakiston's manuscript notes.*

Hak., 179	Blak., 1110	♂	Hakodate, Yezo.....	Feb. 1, 1873	70	....	.....	....	.....	133
Do. 180	1112	♂	Do.....	Mch. 24, 1873	64	...	.....	....	.....	127
	1113	♂	Do.....	Mch. 24, 1873	64	....	.....	....	.....	127
Do. 182	2388	♂	Sapporo, Yezo..	May 8, 1877	60	....	.....	....	.....	125
Do. 183	2559	♂	Do	Apr. —, 1878	61	....	.....	....	.....	125
Do. 222	2785	♂	Do.....	Nov. 3, 1881	61	....	.....	....	.....	123
Do. 181	2387	♀	Do.....	May 6, 1877	58	....	.....	....	.....	110
Swinhoe, —..	1111	?	Hakodate, Yezo.	Feb. 1, 1873	58	....	.....	....	.....	122